



Regional Competitiveness Program

*Helping communities strengthen their economic competitiveness
through regional cooperation*

Request for Re-qualification August 2003



Virginia Department of Housing and
Community Development
501 North Second Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219-1321
(804) 371-7030
www.dhcd.state.va.us

Request for Re-qualification Regional Competitiveness Program

Introduction

The Regional Competitiveness Program (RCP) was created to help communities strengthen their economic competitiveness through regional cooperation. The RCP was designed to provide an incentive for communities to undertake new levels of regional activity to address obstacles to economic competitiveness. While recognizing that many regions have made progress on regional cooperation, this initiative is not about business as usual. It is about stimulating new, meaningful responses that take regions to higher levels of cooperation to respond specifically to the concerns and issues that impact economic competitiveness. For a more complete treatment of the purpose and intent of the Program and of all the requirements, please refer to the Regional Competitiveness Program Guidelines, August 2001.

After its first five years of qualification with the program, each partnership has the opportunity to re-qualify for another five-year period. While the re-qualification process recognizes each region's past progress on regional cooperation, it requires each region to continue to reach for higher levels of cooperation. In order for a region to re-qualify for RCP funding, several legislatively-set requirements must be met. These include revising and adopting a regional economic development strategic plan and scoring at least 20 points in the evaluation system assessing the impact of existing and proposed regional activities.

Submission Requirements

Before a region can submit a Request for Re-qualification, the requirement relating to the revision and adoption of a regional strategic economic development plan must be met. Once this has been completed, partnerships are in a position to re-qualify.

Requests for Re-qualification must be postmarked or hand delivered (UPS or FedEx are considered "hand delivered") to DHCD by *August 29, 2003*. Submissions should be directed to: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Attention: Division of Community Development, 501 North Second Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Please submit one original and five copies of the Request for Re-qualification. Please use white, 8 1/2" x 11" paper and place the original and each copy in three ring binders. (Do not use spiral binders.)

Partnerships may present the Request for Re-qualification information outlined below in whatever format that best meets their needs and clearly communicates the necessary information.

Regional Configuration

1. Identify the jurisdictions that are participating in the region. *Note: Any regional configuration that is different from the configuration in the region's currently approved qualification must have prior written approval by DHCD.*
2. If a locality outside the planning district boundary, but contiguous to it, is included in the region, please provide documentation that all of the localities within the region concur with its inclusion.
3. If the region includes a locality that is also participating in another region, please indicate how much of its population is to be associated with each region for fund distribution purposes and the method used to apportion its population between the two regions.
4. Attach copies of the resolutions from each participating jurisdiction indicating its recognition of and participation in this region

Regional Partnership

1. Attach a copy of the bylaws or charter of the regional partnership.
2. Provide a list of the members of the partnership and a narrative explanation of how the partnership members meet the representational requirements of the RCP.
3. Attach copies of the resolutions from each participating jurisdiction indicating that the partnership is authorized to carry out the provisions of the RCP on their behalf.
4. Describe the methodology by which funds will be distributed among participating jurisdictions if the region is eligible to receive RCP funding. This description should be clear and detailed enough for DHCD to calculate each participating jurisdiction's funding allocation and prepare checks for the appropriate entities.
5. Attach copies of the resolutions from each participating jurisdiction indicating its approval of the fund distribution methodology.
6. Attach a completed W-9 Form for each jurisdiction/entity that is to receive funds under the region's fund distribution methodology. See Appendix C.

A local governing body may submit one resolution that addresses all RCP required actions: participation, partnership may carry out provision on locality's behalf, approval of funding distribution.

Regional Strategic Economic Development Plan

1. Attach a copy of the revised regional strategic economic development plan adopted by the partnership.
2. Attach documentation of the partnership's adoption of the plan. The Regional Partnership must officially adopt the revised strategic plan within the 12 months prior to submitting the Request for Re-qualification. (For Requests for Re-qualification submitted on August 31, 2003, the Regional Partnership must adopt the strategic plan between September 1, 2002 and August 31, 2003.)
3. Describe the strategic planning process used in developing the plan, including the role taken by the members of the partnership. Include a description of the public participation components of the process.
4. The regional strategic economic development plan must include the following components:
 - Definition of economic competitiveness for the region.
 - A vision for the region's economic future.
 - Demographic and economic trend analysis that includes a comparison of the region to at least two identified competitor regions outside the Commonwealth. The analysis must include these items: median family income changes during the last decade; job creation and loss during the last decade; regional income disparity trends during the past five years as shown by differences in median family income levels among the region's localities; and private sector investment trends during the past decade. Use 2000 Census data or other more recent data where available (indicate source).
 - Issues of regional economic competitiveness. These should be prioritized in order of importance. This is one of the most critical aspects of the planning process and requires the partnership to determine the region's most critical economic competitiveness issues while considering the current regional environment and other data gathered for the planning process.
 - A prioritized five-year action plan. Include proposed joint activities that will address critical economic competitiveness issues and improve the region's competitiveness.
 - Organizations, entities and individuals that have lead responsibility for implementing the activities in the action plan. Indicate for which activities each will be responsible.
 - Role, if any, of the partnership in implementation of the action plan.
 - Clear, measurable outcomes and milestones on the implementation of the proposed joint activities.
 - Description of progress reporting and monitoring system that will be used to measure annual progress in implementing strategic plan recommendations.

Regional Activities

Regions may receive points for both existing and proposed regional activities. Applicants are asked to specify whether an activity is existing or proposed. DHCD considers that an existing activity is one that was implemented *prior to July 1, of the year a region seeks re-qualification. (For Requests for Re-qualification submitted on August 31, 2003, this date is July 1, 2002.)* A proposed activity is one that is planned for in the regional strategic economic development plan. Existing joint activities that are expanded in scope or in number of participating localities may be considered a new joint activity but shall not receive the full value of points. In certain cases there may be some question as to whether an activity should be considered existing or proposed. DHCD will look at the implementation of activities as a determination of when an activity was initiated.

Both existing and proposed activities must be directly related to the strategic plan. Existing activities will receive the same scores in the application for re-qualification as the activities received in application for qualification.

Existing Activities

List the *existing* regional activities on which the region would like to be scored. The region may submit two categories of existing activities: 1) activities that have already been scored in the region's current RCP qualification and/or 2) activities that have not been scored in the region's current RCP qualification

1. For each of the activities that have already been scored in the region's current RCP qualification, follow these instructions:
 - a) List the activity.
 - b) List the points received for the activity in the region's current RCP qualification.
 - c) Identify the issue area in which the activity was scored in the region's current RCP qualification. See Appendix A.
 - d) Provide a description of the activity.
2. For any *existing* activities that have **not** already been scored in the region's current RCP qualification, follow these instructions:
 - a) List the activity on which the region would like to be scored.
 - b) Identify the issue area in which the region would like it to be scored. See Appendix A.
 - c) Provide a description of the activity.
 - d) Concisely discuss the activity's relationship to the scoring criteria outlined in the RCP Guidelines. See Appendix B.

- 1) In discussing the significance of the activity in relationship to its impact on regional economic competitiveness, describe how and to what extent the activity addresses/addressed the region's critical issues of economic competitiveness.
 - 2) In discussing the significance of the activity in enhancing cooperation among local governments, describe how the activity represents/represented new levels of cooperation or how it extends/extended existing cooperative relationships.
 - 3) In discussing the complexity or difficulty in carrying out the activity, describe how implementation of the activity is/was different from existing regional efforts and what new levels of cooperation are/were needed.
 - 4) In discussing the amount of fiscal resources committed to each activity, provide the amounts, sources and status of the fiscal resources.
 - 5) In discussing the number of participating localities, identify each jurisdiction that is actively involved in the activity.
- e) Discuss the date it was placed in service or began active operation and the plans for its continued use or operation over the next five years. If an activity has been initiated but is not yet in service or operation, provide clear, measurable implementation milestones for the five-year funding period in the following increments: quarterly for the first year, semi-annually for the second year, and annually for the third, fourth, and fifth years.

Proposed Activities

1. List and describe the *proposed* regional activities from the strategic plan on which the region would like to be scored. If an existing activity that is to be expanded in scope or in the number of participating localities is to be scored as a proposed activity, provide information on its expansion.
2. For each proposed activity, identify the issue area in which the region would like it to be scored. See Appendix A.
3. Provide a description of the activity.
4. For each proposed activity on which the region wants to be scored, concisely discuss its relationship to the scoring criteria outlined in the RCP Guidelines. See Appendix B.
 - a) In discussing the significance of the activity in relationship to its impact on regional economic competitiveness, describe how and to what extent the activity will address the region's critical issues of economic competitiveness.
 - b) In discussing the significance of the activity in enhancing cooperation among local governments, describe how the activity represents new levels of cooperation or how it extends existing cooperative relationships.
 - c) In discussing the complexity or difficulty in carrying out the activity, describe how implementation of the activity is different from existing regional efforts and what new levels of cooperation are needed.
 - d) In discussing the amount of fiscal resources committed to each activity, provide the amounts, sources and status of the fiscal resources.
 - e) In discussing the number of participating localities, identify each jurisdiction that will be actively involved in the activity.

5. For each proposed activity, provide clear, measurable implementation milestones for the five-year funding period in the following increments: quarterly for the first year, semi-annually for the second year, and annually for the third, fourth, and fifth years. A detailed implementation schedule for each proposed activity may be used.

Issue Area Point Adjustment

DHCD will consider requests to make adjustments in the total allowable point value for issue areas. Such requests must identify how the issue area is of particular urgency to economic competitiveness and why the existing total allowable point value does not adequately address it.

1. If the region would like to have the total allowable point value for any given issue area adjusted, identify the issue area and the desired point adjustment.
2. Provide a rationale for the point adjustment request based on the particular relevance of the issue area to economic competitiveness as identified in the region's strategic plan.

Request for Bonus Points

Applicants may request bonus points for actions previously taken to reduce the property tax burdens throughout the region or for actions taken to improve the efficiency of delivery of governmental services. Activities for which bonus points are requested must clearly address one of these two results. DHCD will use the scoring criteria outlined in the RCP Guidelines in determining the amount of bonus points.

1. Describe actions taken to reduce the property tax burden throughout the region or actions taken to improve the efficiency of delivery of government services.
2. For each proposed activity on which the region wants to be scored, discuss its relationship to the scoring criteria outlined in the RCP Guidelines. See Appendix B.
 - a) In discussing the significance of the activity in relationship to its impact on regional economic competitiveness, describe how and to what extent the activity addresses/addressed the region's critical issues of economic competitiveness.
 - b) In discussing the significance of the activity in enhancing cooperation among local governments, describe how the activity represents/represented new levels of cooperation or how it extends/extended existing cooperative relationships.
 - c) In discussing the complexity or difficulty in carrying out the activity, describe how implementation of the activity is/was different from existing regional efforts and what new levels of cooperation are/were needed.
 - d) In discussing the amount of fiscal resources committed to each activity, provide the amounts, sources and status of the fiscal resources.
 - e) In discussing the number of participating localities, identify each jurisdiction that is actively involved in the activity.

Technical Assistance Contacts:

Program Requirements and Application:

Mary Reynolds (804) 371-7063 or mreynolds@dhcd.state.va.us

Division of Community Development

(804) 371-7030 Fax: (804) 371-7093

Address:

Virginia Department of Housing
and Community Development
501 North Second Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Appendix A

Issue Areas and Point Weights

Issue Area	Weight
Job Creation or Economic Development	10
Region Revenue Sharing or Growth Sharing Agreement	10
Education	10
Human Services	8
Local Land Use	8
Housing	8
Transportation	5
Law Enforcement	5
Solid Waste	4
Water and Sewer Services	4
Corrections	3
Fire Services and Emergency Medical Services	3
Libraries	2
Parks and Recreation	2

Appendix B

Issue Areas and Point Weights

Criteria	Weight
The significance of the activity as measured by its impact on regional economic competitiveness	50%
The significance of the activity on improving or strengthening cooperative working relationships among local governments	35%
The complexity or difficulty in carrying out the activity	5%
The amount of fiscal resources committed to implementing the activity	5%
The number of localities participating in the activity	5%

Appendix C

Form W-9

Form W-9: IRS Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.

See next page.

Attach completed W-9 forms to the Request for Re-qualification.
Do NOT send them to the IRS.